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DE RUEHEG #0434 0461605
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3627
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS CAIRO 000434

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [ARABL](#) [KPAL](#) [MEPN](#) [IS](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY GENERAL MOUSSA LETTER TO THE
SECRETARY ON JERUSALEM

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Sensitive but unclassified. Please handle accordingly.

1. (SBU) Post received a letter from Arab League Secretary General Amre Moussa, addressed February 7, 2007, to the Secretary of State regarding Jerusalem and its status with

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respect to the World Heritage Convention. The text of Moussa's letter is below at paragraph two. The original letter will be pouched to NEA/RA. Of note, the letter was dated one day before conflict erupted over Israel's construction work at the Mughrabi Gate.

2. (SBU) Text of Arab League Moussa's February 7 Letter to the Secretary:

League of Arab States
The Secretary General

Cairo, February 7, 2007
Unofficial Translation

Excellency,

Let me at the outset express my appreciation for the important cultural and historical role played by your country, as a member of the World Heritage Committee in charge of preserving this heritage all over the world.

In this context, I would like to draw your attention to an issue regarding the preservation of the cultural heritage in Palestine. The Arab Ministers of Culture have categorically rejected the inclusion by Israel of Jerusalem as an Israeli site on the World Heritage List which represents a defiance of international law and resolutions of international legitimacy, including the World Heritage Convention. The Arab Ministers of Culture have issued a communique in this regard that has been transmitted earlier to you by the Director General of ALECSO (The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization).

As you know, the Security Council has affirmed in several resolutions (No. 252/1968, 267/1969, 298/1971, 446/1979, 452/1979, 465/1980, 476/1980, 478/1980, 605/1987) that Israel's attempts to change the legal and demographic status of East Jerusalem are illegitimate. The General Assembly also adopted similar resolutions, confirming that East Jerusalem is an occupied territory and that, consequently, Israel is considered an occupying power.

The inclusion of East Jerusalem on the heritage list by Israel, an occupying power, represents a flagrant violation of Israel's legal obligations in accordance with international law, as well as with both Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

The World Heritage Committee will hold its next meeting in New Zealand on June 23, 2007 to discuss this matter. Therefore, I address this message to you with the request that the Committee would help ensure that principles of international law are upheld and that the Committee would not approve the inclusion of Jerusalem on Israel's preliminary heritage list, in compliance with the fact that East Jerusalem is an occupied city.

I am confident that Your Excellency understands the intricate and sensitive situation concerning Jerusalem to the Arab, Muslim, and Christian worlds, and therefore understands the demand to exclude Jerusalem from the Israeli preliminary list. I have addressed a message in this regard to the Director General of UNESCO requesting him to bring the matter to the attention of the World Heritage Committee.

Sincerely,
/s/
Amre Moussa

End text of letter.
RICCIARDONE